

OUR RELIGIOUS COLUMN.

The Repression of Sin in the Christian Church.

It is an acknowledged rule in all worldly things that prevention is better than cure, and the fifth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians teaches us that the rule holds good in divine things as well. We shall not dwell upon the sin recorded and dealt with in this chapter. It is painful to think that even in the Church at Corinth, a Church so lately called to the knowledge of the truth, and endowed with so many miraculous gifts as we know it to have possessed, a sin so flagrant a character should have been committed. Neither shall we dwell on the sentence pronounced upon the offender, which embraces more than mere exclusion from the Christian community, and implies the exercise of a peculiar power, the possession of which by the Church seems to have passed away. The Apostle resolves that the guilty member of the Corinthian Church referred to shall be delivered unto Satan "for the destruction of the flesh;" that is, that he may become the victim of bodily sickness and disease, so that, under the pressure of temporal affliction, his conscience may be awakened, his sinful inclinations destroyed, and the bitterness of the fruits of sin brought home to him. It is not a solitary instance in the New Testament of such a punishment. Elymas the sorcerer was struck blind when he resisted St. Paul; and we read in this very epistle of disease and death brought upon the Corinthians for their profanation of the Lord's Supper—"for this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." In the instance before us, indeed, it was not found necessary to inflict the punishment denounced. The Apostle resolves only that it shall be inflicted at a certain time and in a certain way, leaving, of course, in the meanwhile, the possibility of repentance to the offender, a possibility which we know, from 2 Cor. ii. 5-8, was a reality. He did repeat; there was even danger that he would be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow; the Apostle had to enjoin the Corinthians to forgive him, and to confirm their love towards him.

How far a sentence similar to that thus pronounced could now be inflicted in its completeness it is difficult to say. On the one hand, it may be urged that there is here the direct exercise of apostolic power; and that, without the possession of those apostolic gifts which substantiated and regulated the exercise of that power, any attempt on the part of the Church of our day to exercise it could only prove dangerous to others, and draw down ridicule on herself. On the other hand, it is to be noticed that St. Paul does not seem to place himself, in the passage before us, on any platform distinct from that occupied by the Church. No doubt he takes the lead, but he associates the Church with himself; the sentence is finally to be the Church's, and not his. We are thus led up to a question which does not seem to have been yet adequately discussed, the distinctions drawn in connection with which are rather in a high degree arbitrary and unsatisfactory—the question, viz., How far the powers of the Apostolic Church were peculiar to it; or, How far they were at least intended by the Saviour to be the possession of his people in all ages.

Having said thus much upon points all notice of which it was hardly possible to omit, we turn to what more immediately concerns the question before us in this paper. How shall we best repress sin in the Christian Church?

It is the duty of the Church at large, the duty of each particular congregation, of each Christian community, to keep alive in its members the feeling that they are one united whole, not a mere collection of individual persons, each standing apart from the rest and concerned only about his own salvation, but an organized body, all whose parts are bound together for the production of a holy result in which all are interested, to which all are bound, but which none of them can produce separately. There seems reason to fear that the force of this conception of a church—a congregation—calling is not sufficiently felt among us. There is earnest zeal, anxious prayer, self-denying effort on the part of tens of thousands of the members of our congregations to grow up to the great standard of the divine life presented in Christ Jesus. In many a private chamber, in many a family circle, in the midst of us the Saviour sees of the travail of his soul and is satisfied. Nothing can be more beautiful, nothing more saintly, than the specimens of these to which, thank God, we can point on every side. But can we speak equally of congregational, of common, effort in the same great cause? Is the idea of the common responsibility sufficiently impressed upon us? Do we feel enough that we are not only our own, but our brothers' and our sisters' keepers; that, when they stand strong in the lovely life of Christianity, we have a share in the blessing; that when they fall the blame is in part ours? An old Father of the Church writes—"They say in the traditions that Matthew the Apostle constantly said that, if the neighbor of an elect man sin, the elect man has sinned. For, had he conducted himself as the Lord prescribes, his neighbor also would have been filled with such reverence for the life he led as not to sin." Could these words have been written by many now? The feeling of strangeness with which most will at first read them is the answer in the negative. And the negative is confirmed by the bitter complaints made, during the commercial disasters of the last few years, only against those, often office-bearers even in their different churches, who were the immediate instruments of the calamities and dishonor. Were these complaints in their exclusiveness just? We have no wish to defend those against whom they were made. Let them be condemned as they deserve to be; and let the condemnation be continued after they have retrieved their own fortunes, while their victims pine and die. But did it never occur to the general Christian community that it was largely partaker of the sin; that, by its own love of luxury and display, by its too common haste to be rich, by its want of plainness and simplicity and practical manifestation of the feeling that truth and goodness are better than worldly splendor, it was fostering, instead of checking, the passions which culminated with some in so much ruin and disgrace? It ought to have said, "These men's sins are ours; we have encouraged and spurred them on, and the shame of what has happened lies at our door as well as theirs. That conviction would have led it to set its own house in order, and the family tone would have helped at least to preserve in future other members of the family from going astray."

Our Christian life is a holy feast, and we are one; these are the two great lessons of the chapter we have been considering. Let us endeavor to rise to the thought of them. We shall then endeavor to prevent sin rather than need to cure it; and, when we must have recourse to discipline as a cure, our discipline will have a far greater power than it has now.

SUMMARY OF CHURCH NEWS.

METHODIST.

—Rev. J. W. Dawson was received to the General Ohio Conference at its fall meeting in Locks, from the Free Presbyterian Church.

—James Long and S. P. M. Tasker, Esqs., have each subscribed to the "Loan Fund" of the Church Extension Society of the Methodist Church the sum of \$10,000, payable in installments of \$1000 per annum.

—The total number of ministers in the Methodist Episcopal Church South in 1898 was 2495; local preachers, 4413; white members, 593,593; colored members, 32,087. The bishops are J. O. Andrew, B. Payne, G. F. Parker, J. Early, H. H. Kavanagh, W. M. Wightman, E. M. Marvin, D. S. Doggett, H. N. McVey.

—Methodism in the United States comprises a membership of 2,357,518, and an itinerant ministry of 14,076—a body more than three times as large, in the first instance, and more than four times in the second, as the corresponding body in England and Scotland. The aggregate, in all lands, is 19,251 ministers and 3,353,847 members—a number large enough for a nation.

—The Methodist Episcopal State Convention, which was announced some weeks ago, was held last week in New Haven. From its report it appears that the number of Methodist church members in Connecticut is 20,000. The number of churches is 106, valued at \$1,046,000, and of parsonages 103, valued at \$1,308,000. There are 109 ministers, including supplies; 174 Sunday Schools, 15,831 scholars, and 64,883 volumes in the libraries.

—The increase in the department of church edifices and parsonages during the year is very large. In the United States, 12,048 churches, the increase is 356, an average of nearly one every day in the year. In a total of 3968 parsonages there is an increase of 157. The Methodist Episcopal Church has now invested in church edifices and parsonages the sum of \$24,257,272; the increase for the year 1898 being \$6,144,756. The average value of churches (houses of worship) is nearly \$4000, and that of parsonages about \$1750.

—The Trustees of the Charles Street Church, Baltimore, have secured an eligible site for their new church. They have purchased the lot and family mansion of Charles A. Gambrell, Esq., northeast corner of Charles and Monument streets, fronting fifty-one feet on Monument street, with a depth of one hundred and sixty feet, and the adjoining residence on Monument street, fronting thirty feet, with a depth of one hundred and sixty feet, to the wide alley in the rear. For the Gambrell property \$70,000 was paid, and for the adjoining house and ground \$20,000, making the entire cost of the property \$90,000. The present Charles Street Church has been sold to the Light street congregation for the sum of \$120,000. The purchase includes all the furniture of the church, and also the parsonage on West Fayette street, and furniture.

—A beautiful Gothic church, erected at Hobbs' Depot, near Louisville, Ky., was dedicated to the worship of God lately. Dr. Stuart Robinson preached in the morning to a large and attentive audience. This neat and commodious building, in connection with Dr. Hill's school has been erected at a cost of a little over \$12,000.

—The Free-Will Baptists now number 1375 churches and 66,631 communicants, an increase of 97 churches and 5447 communicants during the past year.

—From the minutes of the Associations with which the churches of Philadelphia are connected, we have gathered the following statistics for the year with regard to them:—Baptists, 733; deaths, 163; present membership, 14,134.

—There are five Baptist churches in Philadelphia with pastors at the present time, the fourth, Twelfth, Passyunk, Sixth, and Second Germantown. There are four Baptist Mission Churches in Philadelphia, viz: Angola, Fox Chase, Boardman, and Rittenhousentown.

—The Baptist Theological Seminary and University of Chicago has now over one hundred students. Most of them are from the Northwest, and several are ordained ministers who have been settled as pastors. The Theological Seminary charges no tuition, and the University gives to the students the benefit of free tuition on its scholarships. The Seminary has secured the Hengstenberg Library, of 12,000 volumes, in Prussia, for \$6000 currency.

—A call from the congregation of the Reformed church, Manayunk, has been tendered to the Rev. P. Stryker Talmage to become their pastor.

—The Second Reformed Church of Philadelphia has extended a call to the Rev. Isaac S. Hartley, of the Sixth Avenue Church, New York. The call has been accepted.

—Mr. D. D. Williamson has left \$10,000 to the Theological Seminary (Reformed) of New Brunswick. He also made the Boards of Foreign and Domestic Missions of the Reformed Church his residuary legatees, and it is thought they will realize about \$10,000 each.

—The Fourth United Presbyterian Church in this city the Rev. W. C. Jackson, pastor, elected to the vacant pastorate of the church, and to its communicant's list on Sabbath, November 14. This congregation have just purchased an eligible site for a new church edifice at the northeast corner of Fitzwater and Nineteenth streets, and will probably proceed to erect on it a new house of worship.

—The Fifth United Presbyterian Church, of this city the Rev. A. Calhoun pastor, has just manifested a most becoming spirit of liberality and enterprise in paying off the debt that has long encumbered the church, and in procuring its great work with increased encouragement and success. At the Communion in this church, on November 21, eighteen persons were added to the membership.

—The Rev. E. Y. Garrett has been dismissed from his pastorate, in Millbury, and accepted a call to the Plymouth Church, in Pittsburg, Pa., where he will soon be installed.

—The new chapel for Dr. Nehemiah Adams' Church, on Columbia avenue, in this city, is cruciform in shape, and will seat five hundred persons. Services were held in it, for the first time, last Sabbath.

—The Rev. W. S. Emery confirmed twenty-eight persons at a recent communion service held at the Tineum Church, in Bucks county, of which he is the pastor.

—At the recent meeting of the Philadelphia Conference of the East Pennsylvania Synod of the Lutheran Church, the subject of Beneficial Education was considered, and it was resolved that an extra effort be made for the collection of education money, and that the conference co-operate with the rest of the churches connected with the synod in sustaining the students at Gettysburg.

—At the meeting of the General Council of the Lutheran Church, recently held, the council declared itself prepared to receive propositions from the Missouri and Ohio churches, looking to their organic union with it in accordance with its fundamental principles. The right of the Iowa Synod to debate, but not to vote, was determined. The question of the Minnesota Synod, on the true interpretation of the Four Points, as determined at Pittsburg after long debates, a reference back to the President of the inquiring synod, its reference to a committee, and their report upon it, was left unanswered, requiring a year for special consideration. Dr. Knauth reported an answer to the Pope's encyclical letter, and was appointed delegate to the Leipzig Conference.

—The exercises of the Holy Jubilee have commenced at the new St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Seventeenth and Siles streets, and will terminate on the 8th instant, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

—A Mission will take place in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Front and Laurel streets (Rev. Michael Flann, pastor), on the 8th instant. It will be under the auspices of a number of Redemptionist Fathers from Baltimore.

—The grand jubilee altar built for the St. Francis' Catholic Church, Twenty-fifth and Cal-

lowhill streets, has been put in its place. The altar is of Italian marble and 15 feet high, and about 20 feet from the floor of the church. The canopy is ornamented with wreaths of roses and other flowers, enclosing the altar. Above this is the tabernacle, with marble door, surmounted by a dome supported by six round and four square columns. The dome is richly ornamented. The altar cost over \$3000.

—It is a significant fact that twenty out of the twenty-eight Episcopal churches in Maine are supported by Sunday collections.

—The Rev. Dr. Canfield has resigned the rectorship of Christ Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., in consequence of continued ill health.

—The Rev. A. D. Hawn has received a call to the Third Presbyterian Church, Williamsport, Pa.

—The Rev. Robert Scott has removed from the church in Smithville to the Presbyterian church, Moriches, Long Island.

—The Rev. J. Gardner, of Hammond, New York, has received and accepted a unanimous call to the church of Canton, New York, and enters on its duties immediately. Correspondents will please notice the change.

—The Rev. W. F. Kean, formerly pastor of the Presbyterian church, Freeport, Pa., having removed to Columbus City, Louisiana, Iowa, correspondents and editors will please address him at the latter place.

The Mound Builders.

Archaeological Discoveries Near Chicago.

A discovery has just been made in the suburbs of Chicago which, it is believed, will add much towards the solution of problems connected with the earliest inhabitants of North America. Prof. William Stimson, who has long been connected with the Chicago Academy of Sciences, a short time since, while passing a Mr. Thatcher's farm, just beyond the town of Harlem, and adjoining Haas Park, discovered hillocks which he suspected might belong to the mound-building period, and might contain valuable mementoes of a past age. A few days afterwards he obtained permission of the owner of the farm to make examination of the mounds, and last week he, together with Charles Kennicott, made a personal examination of the premises, and uncovered the earth to the depth of about three feet. They had dug but a short time, when human bones were discovered, which, upon examination, proved to be of a race at present extinct upon the continent of North America. Persevering efforts of several days were rewarded with the finding of several other similar mounds, and the remains of twenty human beings. Two entire skeletons were found, with the exception that one of them lacked two corneal bones, and the other a few of the bones of the hands and feet. The bones themselves were very friable, and required the most careful handling to prevent their falling into dust again. The bones which mark the peculiar characters of the beings who once possessed them are those of the cranium. It is well known that the heads of Europeans and all descendants of the Caucasian race are usually much greater in length and breadth. They have what is technically called the *dolichocephalic* skull, while the Indians, who inhabited America at the landing of Columbus, possessed square heads, or skulls which archaeologists call *brachycephalic*. The skulls found at Thatcher's farm are of the *brachycephalic* type, and this fact stamps them as being at least as old as the first discovery of America. It is said that the influence of civilization have entirely changed the shape of the Indians' skull, so that the present tribes, no matter how much isolated from the white man, present no cases of the antique Indian head. Another evidence of the antiquity of these remains is the position in which they were found. Professor Stimson was obliged to remove a large tree which grew on one of the mounds to reach the skeletons. A cross section of this tree disclosed 87 rings, and, since botanists claim that the evidences of the first 15 years' growth of old trees has been obliterated, it follows that this tree was at least 100 years old. The mounds were about two feet above the surface of the prairie, were oval in shape, and were about 4 or 5 feet wide, and from 10 to 20 feet in length. They were each surrounded by a well-defined trench. Before reaching the remains a layer of hard blue clay was penetrated, and the bones were found reposing in a bed of gravel. The remains were found three feet below the surface. The mounds contained no tools or weapons, or at least none have yet been discovered; although, as the researches have not terminated, it is not impossible that these objects may yet be found. The remains were apparently thrown together promiscuously, as if the rites of sepulture had been hurried—perhaps at the close of a battle. From all the circumstances, it is believed that when the beings were buried there the place was the margin of the lake, and thus the phenomena are closely connected with another interesting series of questions relating to the lake and its physical condition and history, before the shores were discovered by Europeans. Dr. Dethman read the following report on these discoveries before the Chicago Academy of Sciences:

"There were five in number, located near the eastern bank of the Desplaines river. The ground is covered with young trees and underbrush, and the soil is clay interspersed with gravel. On the farm of Mr. True, on section 36 of the town of Layden, a circular mound, 40 feet in diameter, was discovered. The first discovered was an elliptical mound lying near and parallel to the main bank of the river—favorably located for a lookout station. This mound is 124 feet in circumference and 48 in diameter on northwest to southeast, and 28 feet northeast to southwest. At the southern end is a shallow trench, eight feet wide. Upon this mound are several black oak stumps, the largest of which is nineteen inches in diameter, with 87 rings. It has a very gentle slope, and is elevated 12 inches above the surrounding ground. Mr. Kennicott made an exploratory excavation to the depth of three and a half feet, and found the mound composed of clayey soil, very compact. Fifty-two feet south of this mound, and 60 feet from the bank of the river, was another, elevated to the height of 37 inches, and surrounded by a well-defined shallow trench six feet across. The measurements are—Circumference, 108 feet; long diameter, 37 feet; short diameter, 23 feet. The ground is covered with hazel-bush and scrub-oaks, and there are four small stumps, six inches in diameter. An excavation was made in this mound, but no signs of stratification of the soil, which was clayey in character, were found. But at the depth of thirty-six inches there was found a small bone—a fragment of a uni—but nothing else. The excavation was continued six inches below the surrounding level, and harder clay, with no indications of removal, was found. Fifteen feet distant is a remarkable mound, which has some resemblance to an animal, and has been christened 'The Black Bear.' The bear lies parallel to the Desplaines river, seventy feet southeast of No. 1, and the body is sixty feet long, thirty feet wide, and elevated three and a-half feet. The extremities are lower and flatter. The anterior extremities are twenty-one feet in

length, while the posterior portion is irregular and longer. To the east of the third mound is a well-marked one, 102 feet in circumference, elevated two feet. Hidden in the underbrush, with an old stump on the summit, was a circular mound, sixty feet in circumference, and elevated two feet. At the depth of three feet, lying closely together, were found portions of two skulls and an impression of the third. One skull had been punctured by the sharp point of a war-club."

—Chicago Tribune.

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LEGAL NOTICES.

IN THE ORPHANS' COURT FOR THE CITY

AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA.

Estate of ROBERT W. SMITH, deceased.

Notice is hereby given that the said ROBERT W. SMITH, widow of said deceased, has filed her petition in the office of the

Clerk of said Court, with an appointment of the personal

representative she elects to retain under the Act of Assembly

of April 14, 1891, and its supplements, and that the same

will be received by the Court on SATURDAY, December

11, 1899, unless exceptions be filed thereto.

Attest: RUNDLE SMITH,

Attorney for Petitioner.

IN THE ORPHANS' COURT FOR THE CITY

AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA.

Estate of MANUS MCCLUSKEY, deceased.

The Auditor appointed by the Court to audit, settle, and

adjust the account of MARY MCCLUSKEY (late

McCluskey), administratrix, deceased, and to report dis-

tribution of the balance in the hands of the account,

will meet the parties interested for the purpose of his ap-

pointment, on WEDNESDAY, December 13, 1899, at 4

o'clock P. M., at his office, No. 112 S. FIFTH Street, in

the city of Philadelphia.

Attest: WILLIAM L. DENNIS, Auditor.

IN THE ORPHANS' COURT FOR THE CITY

AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA.

Estate of JOHN C. NIPPS, deceased.

The Auditor appointed by the Court to audit, settle, and

adjust the account of MARY NIPPS, executrix, and to report

distribution of the balance in the hands of the account,

will meet the parties interested for the purpose of his ap-

pointment, on THURSDAY, December 14, 1899, at 4

o'clock P. M., at his office, No. 202 S. FIFTH Street, in

the city of Philadelphia.

Attest: ROBERT P. DECHERT, Auditor.

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